



# **The Admirals: Nimitz, Halsey, Leahy, and King-- The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea**

*Walter R. Borneman*

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**How history's only five-star admirals triumphed in World War II and made the United States the world's dominant sea power.**

Only four men in American history have been promoted to the five-star rank of Admiral of the Fleet: William Leahy, Ernest King, Chester Nimitz, and William Halsey. These four men were the best and the brightest the navy produced, and together they led the U.S. navy to victory in World War II, establishing the United States as the world's greatest fleet.

In *THE ADMIRALS*, award-winning historian Walter R. Borneman tells their story in full detail for the first time. Drawing upon journals, ship logs, and other primary sources, he brings an incredible historical moment to life, showing us how the four admirals revolutionized naval warfare forever with submarines and aircraft carriers, and how these men—who were both friends and rivals—worked together to ensure that the Axis fleets lay destroyed on the ocean floor at the end of World War II.

**The Admirals: Nimitz, Halsey, Leahy, and King--The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea Details**

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## **Dj says**

Reading about Major Personalities generally comes in one of two types. Either their are very detailed individual views which focus on someones entire live or they are groups of people that are similar and are fairly broken up and the kind of synopsis you would expect to get out of a resume. Any book written about someone has a general trap that the author respects and admires the individual they are writing about. No surprise really, since why would you want to write about someone you did care much for.

Lately there has been a tend towards writing about more than one individual at the same time, with mixed results. Generally these books make for great launch pads to find out more about some individual that you generally don't know much about. Hitler's Generals is a fair example of this. Brief and for the most part laudatory, it is more a book that gets you started than one that gets you what you want to know. Another trend is to write about a few individuals as a group, Patton, Rommel and Monty for example and do a kind of compare and contrast on them. While this can prove quite interesting, in generally doesn't allow for much depth in the space allotted. Mostly due to the differences of backgrounds and systems.

The Admirals is along this last line, it takes four individuals, all of who achieved five star rank in the Navy. Since they are all members of the US Navy, the compare and contrast can be more full and since it doesn't just include the four who are named as the main topic of the book, but others like Spruance, Fletcher and even Kimmel, not as deeply but with how their careers and those of the Main topic individuals came into contact with each other it is a more fulfilling read.

As the author points out, these Admirals of the Fleet couldn't have been more widely different from one another. The book is very good at bringing forth those differences without denigrating any of them as individuals. The reader does get the feeling that the Author considers Halsey not as qualified for the fifth start as Spruance would have been, he doesn't make a really strong point of it and does in fact have a very good rationalization as to why Halsey got it. This is quite a remarkable book. Will have to see if I can find more books by the Author since this one was so impressive.

## **happy says**

I felt this was a good look at the four men who held the rank of Admiral of the Fleet (5 stars) Borneman makes the four men come alive. In the first part of the book, he traces the careers of the 4 men independently, but when World War II starts their stories become intertwined.

He traces both their professional lives and to some extent their personal lives as well. He seems to admire Nimitz and Leahy more than King and Halsey, but gives credit to all four men for their accomplishments during the war.

I liked the way he traced their prewar careers and how they were influenced by their choices. Halsey in destroyers and King bouncing around looking for command time, before both commanding Air Craft Carriers, while Nimitz came up in submarines. Leahy, being the oldest, had the longest career. He was on the USS Oregon at the Battle of Santiago during the Spanish American War and served as Truman's Chief of Staff for 4 years.

In addition to the four Admirals, Borneman looks at the other personalities that played major roles in forming US strategy for the war. This includes the major Army generals, McArthur, Marshall, Eisenhower, as well as the lesser admirals of the Pacific War (including Spruance, Fletcher, McCain)

As this book looks more at the strategy of the war, Borneman does skimp on the descriptions of the battles that were fought, esp Coral Sea and Midway. However, he does spend some pages discussing Halsey's failures in two typhoons in the later stages of the war and how he was able to overcome his mistakes.(view spoiler)

All in all a very good look at the difference in command styles and their effectiveness – obviously all were

successful. I highly recommend this.

### **Jean says**

Most people are aware of the five star Army Generals but few are aware of the five star Admirals. I have read the biographies of each of these men but this is the first book I have read that deals with the four together. All knew each other well; their military lives had intertwined for years; all were from middle-class backgrounds.

Borneman narrates their lives in sometimes intersecting parallels until World War II. King was from a Scots' family from Ohio. He graduated near the top of his Annapolis class and also graduated from Sub School. William Leahy was from a Wisconsin Irish family. He graduated from Annapolis 14th out of 27. He was a gunnery officer aboard the Battleship Oregon during the Spanish American War. He spent 40 years on battleships. William Halsey was from New England. He graduated 43 out of 62 from Annapolis. His first assignment was on the Battleship Kansas. He then went to Aviation School and earned his wings. Chester Nimitz was from a German immigrant family from Texas. He graduated Annapolis 7th of 114. He was known as the calm strategist. They were all great leaders able to motivate subordinates and peers. During WWII FDR was skilled at placing key people in the right place at the right time. FDR appointed Nimitz as Commander in Chief of the Pacific; Halsey in Command of the Pacific 3rd and 5th fleets; King as Commander in Chief of the Navy and Chief of Naval Operations; and Leahy as FDR's military advisor, titled Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief. This position was only used in World War II.

The book is well written and meticulously researched. The author deftly manipulates multiple narrative strands while providing lots of details. Borneman is a military historian and is skilled at archival research. It is amazing that these men who spent their lives in battleships were able to immediately realize that the days of the battleship were over and adapt to the aircraft carrier and submarine for warfare. I learned a lot from reading this book and also enjoyed reading the book. The book is fairly long at about 18 hours.

I read this as an audiobook downloaded from Audible. Brian Troxell does a good job narrating the book. Troxell is an actor, voice over actor and audiobook narrator.

## **From Reader Review The Admirals: Nimitz, Halsey, Leahy, and King--The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea for online ebook**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Kathryn Glover:**

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to understand everything in the world. Each guide has different aim as well as goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They may be reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is actually reading a book. How about the person who don't like examining a book? Sometime, particular person feel need book if they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you'll have this The Admirals: Nimitz, Halsey, Leahy, and King--The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea.

**Maurice Miller:**

Playing with family in the park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, and then why you don't try point that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not experiencing tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition info. Even you love The Admirals: Nimitz, Halsey, Leahy, and King--The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea, it is possible to enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still need to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't understand it, oh come on its named reading friends.

**Dorothy Frazier:**

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**Harrison Johnson:**

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